

## Evaluation of Online Hotel Reviews in TripAdvisor: in Case of Assos Region

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### **Abstract**

In this research, focused on TripAdvisor, one of the systems used in the field of tourism.

Main objective; understanding the using of the TripAdvisor system to share in the market, and tourism business is a highlight. A literal survey on the subject was made and the results of the previous studies were examined and the content analysis work was carried out on the basis of the comments made for the enterprises registered in the Assos region in TripAdvisor. As a result of the study, it was concluded that analyzed 17 enterprises had 481 comments which as mentioned that Assos is expensive and the quality of the service is low. 481 Comments included; 388 positive, 93 negative comments. The positive comments mostly mentioned about natural environment like beautiful see, quite place.

### **Introduction**

First of all, together with developing technology and changing customer profiles, tourism has got different target masses and different types of services. However, since tourism is a service sector, the quality of service offered to customers is changing from operating to operating. Customers from legendary businesses have always enjoyed sharing their services with other people. This behavior of the consumer is a direct marketing gain to operating. By explaining the services, they receive from their ears to the ear, people are increasingly proposing or destroying a region and/or the services they receive. Nowadays, this is also done on the internet. The most common and popular one is TripAdvisor. The majority of businesses use this system to evaluate a platform that has a highly effective role. We will study this system by reviewing the management information systems and talking about the popular systems.

## Literature Review

### *Online Review and Word of Mouth (eWoM)*

The tourism industry has a direct impact on the quality of the customer's supply because of the labor-intensive industry. Traditionally, a person who receives a service wants to share it with others when he is satisfied with the service or not satisfied with the service. In the period when the internet was not common, people conveyed their experiences with the communication method called "from the ear" [1]. As for marketing and publicity, people were talking about this experience only to their immediate surroundings and friends, not to the extent that people could reach massive times. Commenting sites were created online after the widespread use of internet and the quality of service in the tourism sector [2]. It is possible to review these interpretation sites in terms of tourism management in the concept of "management information system". The reason for this is; From the "extranet" concept, they can learn from the platform that the business helps external communication and that customers cannot express their satisfaction levels, complaints and voices [3]. Comments on social networks and blogs affect the purchasing behavior of the consumer. In this regard, TripAdvisor can be considered as a social network for tourism [4].

**Someone who is not satisfied with the quality of the service has seen this event shared with at least 10 people, and those who are satisfied are shared with 4-5 people [5]. As a result of this, adverse experiences negatively affect the purchasing behavior of the customer. In terms of the business, the demand and the decrease of income cause the brand image to be damaged as well.**

But it also includes the concept of "fake review" and "troll". For example; The commentator does not really stay there and can only make fake comments because he wants to be in favor of entertainment or competing businesses. The result obtained in this study is; The content of fake comments is extreme compared to normal interpretations. For example; It's like "I'm the worst hotel I've ever been in", "I've never had such a great vacation", and the places where comments are being interpreted by the profile of the commentators are incompatible [6]. Such false and untrue statements are also available on the TripAdvisor. Thus, it is negatively affected in terms of reliability. The same applies to food and beverage enterprises. Some businesses are planning to raise their scores on online comment sites and get positive feedback [7].

The results of a survey conducted in London indicate that online commentary is effective in selling rooms. Thirty-eight hotel managers conducted a survey; 82% of the participants point out that the hotel's location and room rates are not important to them and that the number of bookings has a positive effect. Online reservation systems still play an important role, but they are not the most important factor in the study [8]. In a research conducted in 2015; An online complaint site [www.sikayetvar.com](http://www.sikayetvar.com) has been analyzed. As a result of the analysis, the most complaining part of the tourism enterprises has been the accommodation enterprises. Most complaints have been written about the staff, food and beverage quality and cleanliness

[9].

### *Online Marketing E-Tourism*

**E-tourism is the abbreviation of e-commerce transactions in the tourism sector that are appropriate; business world, information technology and tourism in the context of three main disciplines.** These three main disciplines come together in e-tourism: accommodation services in tourism, travel agencies and tour operators, attracting visitors, using different information systems and communication technologies and fulfilling the basic functions of businesses like business, management and marketing. For example, when a transportation company or accommodation company involved in the tourism sector uses communication technology to fulfill its marketing/finance functions, it has also performed e-tourism activities. The business world, information systems and the tourism sector perform electronic tourism, interacting with each other and providing communication and feedback [10].

As a result of the researches conducted, online tourism market in Europe increased from 20% in 1998 to 65.2% in 2009. And the use of direct sales channels has increased to 66% [11].

As you can see, there is TripAdvisor, which is shown in the social guides class, and online booking agreement with Booking.com. When researching for a tourism business via TripAdvisor, you may want to make a reservation after reviewing the comments made for that business. In addition, due to the inclusion of the scoring system, the highest rated operators in the region are recommended. It facilitates consumers' preferences within the price-service balance.

In a study conducted in 2016; The awareness and effects of online evaluation sites on the hotel managers in the Alanya region have been investigated. In the study conducted on the 223 executives, it was concluded that all of them were aware of these platforms and 89% of them were on booking numbers and marketing. Very few of the comments were from the food and beverage section and were found to be relevant to the rest of the stay [12]. In another research done; 928 reviews are based on TripAdvisor for 11 accommodations with the highest scores in different regions. Your comments were rated as "RHR" (helpful comments to the person).

As a result, most of the comments were based on online travel reviews, and opinion leader comments greatly influenced travel preferences [1].

**Online commenting sites appear to influence not only business image and marketing but also destination image and marketing [1]. In another study, it was seen that the negative comments on the TripAdvisor were over-exaggerated compared to the positives. Apart from that, when we do not take advantage of the service, comments which are called "troll" or "fake" are formed because of the abuse of comment made by malicious intention. It is also seen as one of the negative aspects of allowing TripAdvisor to make comments without using the service [13].**

TripAdvisor has a very important place for business image. Consumers convey their personal comments, photos and evaluations here because of the service they receive. All comments and evaluations taken in the positive direction create a positive image in terms of business.

This positive image also increases the value that it has in the market. This leads to brand loyalty and consumer habits. We can illustrate that TripAdvisor creates a positive image for businesses; "The world's largest travel site TripAdvisor users rated traditional Dedeman hospitality". With comments from site users, Dedeman Zonguldak has entered the list of "Turkey's Best Hotels" and "Turkey's Best Luxury Hotels". Listed Dedeman Zonguldak, ranked 11th as the best Luxury Hotel in Turkey and the best hotel in Turkey, creates a modern and luxurious lifestyle and serves its guests" [14].

In a research conducted in 2013; Online travel agencies reported that they reflected their image on social

media. Businesses have also noted that their online sales channels include the “hotel web sites”. It provides support for the promotion of the business and also reflects the social media image [15].

### ***Effect of “TripAdvisor” in E-Tourism***

TripAdvisor is the most widely used extranet system today. This system is very important especially for accommodation enterprises. Comments from customers about a business are published on this platform and shared with other users. A potential customer reading this is absolutely positively or negatively affected before the trip. Businesses also accept it as a promotion. TripAdvisor is also a partner company with booking.com and offers online booking. TripAdvisor promotes itself on its official website;

“TripAdvisor® is the world’s largest travel site, enabling travelers to unleash the potential of every trip. TripAdvisor offers advice from millions of travelers, with 435 million reviews and opinions covering 6.8 million accommodations, restaurants and attractions, and a wide variety of travel choices and planning features. Checking more than 200 websites to help travelers find and book today’s lowest hotel prices. TripAdvisor branded sites make up the largest travel community in the world, reaching 390 million average monthly unique visitors in 49 markets worldwide. TripAdvisor: Know better. Book better. Go better” [16].

Booking.com is an associate due to its agreement with TripAdvisor. On Booking.com, users can also comment on businesses. The main difference between them is that if we are going to comment on the business in order to comment on Booking.com, we must have received service without it. Booking.com keeps this under control with the help of businesses on the extranet.

TripAdvisor, as we mentioned, can comment on any business. If we get out of here, comments on Booking.com are expected to be more realistic and more effective than TripAdvisor in influencing buying behavior.

The results of a survey conducted in 2012 indicate that high-rated businesses on Booking.com are preferred over lower-rated ones. In addition, a 1% increase in the ratings indicated that Paris increased room sales by 2.68% and London by 2.62%. In addition, there has been no improvement in room sales of high-rated businesses. The most important criterion is the room price [17].

### ***Comparison of “TripAdvisor” with Other Platforms***

**In addition to the TripAdvisor, there are other online booking and travel comment sites that are used. They are all in the same position as competitors, as if they are rivaling each other.**

A few of these can be cited as “*Neredekal.com*”, “*Lonely Planet*”, “*Vayama*”.

Founded in 2007, Neredekal.com is one of the three most preferred web sites in tourism in Turkey in 2010. It has about 12,000 hotels and more than 1000 local promotions [18].

Customers can be commented on the site and published with comments via foursquare application. I found the reviews useful and not useful. The aim here is to improve the reliability of the interpretation made. It also publishes a video of the businesses’ images. This also contributes to the promotion of the affiliated companies.

TripAdvisor has a car rental service but you can make comments for the rental company and only use Booking.com for price suggestions. Neredekal.com is more advantageous in this regard. However, the number of businesses in TripAdvisor is larger, plus restaurants are available. It also sets out the best businesses and prizes at the end of each year. The total number of comments in the TripAdvisor is also over. As the main tourism market, Neredekal.com gives importance to “incoming” customers and local tourists for Turkey. TripAdvisor has an international structure.

Another structure is Lonely Planet. The fact is that Lonely Planet is a book. This trip prepared for travel and travel planning has information and suggestions about the most famous regions of the World. It is considered an effective platform for destination image and marketing. Lonely Planet’s website can be used to search for hotels. Like TripAdvisor, Lonely Planet leads to Booking.com after the hotel selection. The most important feature that separates TripAdvisor is that there are no user comments. Lonely Planet has a team of travelers. The readers also review the situation of travelers and decide on their travels. The rating system is also available on Booking.com. Historical places and major restaurants are suggested near the selected hotel [19].

Our final example is Vayama; It is an international online travel agency that started service in 2007. It focuses more on selling airline tickets than staying. Hotel reservations can also be made. It is not possible for the customer to comment without accommodation. It also publishes comments made on TripAdvisor. The pricing system should be agreed with Hotels.com [20].

### Methodology/Findings

The aim of the work is specified as to introduce the effects of the online travel and comment site TripAdvisor on consumers and the accommodation enterprises. In this research, a content analysis has been used as the method. The comments on the accommodation establishments registered on the TripAdvisor in the region of Assos have been regarded as the samples. 1365 comments for 18 resort stays have been noted. It is seen that 1 accommodation establishment had no comments and was not considered however 17 enterprises had 481 comments and they were evaluated. In addition to this the governance of the page of the TripAdvisor and how the quality ranking of the enterprises was being done has been researched.

TOTAL COMMENTS	LANGUAGE OF COMMENTS			POSITIVE COMMENTS		NEGATIVE COMMENTS
481	481			388		93
%100	<b>Turkish</b>	407	%84.6	<b>Location</b>	142	<b>F&amp;B</b>
<b>POSITIVE COMMENTS</b>	<b>English</b>	48	%10	<b>Cleanliness</b>	140	<b>Staff</b>
388	<b>German</b>	11	%2.3	<b>F&amp;B</b>	108	<b>Cleanliness</b>
%80.6	<b>Italian</b>	5	%1.1	<b>Quality of Rooms</b>	97	<b>Quality of Rooms</b>
<b>NEGATIVE COMMENTS</b>	<b>French</b>	4	%0.8	<b>Staff</b>	84	<b>Location</b>
93	<b>Russian</b>	3	%0.6	<b>Price</b>	82	<b>Price</b>
%19.4	<b>Spanish</b>	3	%0.6	<b>Behavior of Owners</b>	67	<b>Behavior of Owners</b>

## Table 1. Analysis of Comments

Initially for it is related with the literature study the number of the comments and the contents have been overviewed. The profiles of the individuals who commented on the most commented accommodation establishments have been checked and it is examined if there is a possibility of “Fake Review”. It is seen that the number of the helpful useful comments are quite high. And this is the reason which reduce the suspects of fake comments. Nevertheless, we see that 77 people have rated 5 stars while 100 4 stars. It is noted that among all other foreigners %20 of the Germans have rated 1 star to Assos as a touristic destination. And it is mentioned that Assos is expensive and the quality of the service is low. If we regard the photos that guests stayed in the establishments loaded as the evidence promotion and the image of the establishments are positively being effected. For among 18 enterprises this enterprise is on the 3. Rank. The establishment which is on the 1. rank has a certificate of perfection. Among 124 comments that the establishment had 78 of them are 5 stars 34 of them 4 stars. And likewise, the positive comments are higher in number. When it is for granted that nearly all comments been done on dates close to each other we can say that this enterprise is either new on the TripAdvisor or has newly started. The comments of the foreign guests are quite scarce and starting from this we can say that most of the guests are the Turkish nationality. From among the comments we see that there have been people who were affected by the TripAdvisor they connected with the establishments and made reservations.

One of the comments are like this:

“Hello though we don’t have a check out we left the Hotel Didim where we had an awful experience on the 15th of September. We found the X Hotel of Assos on the TripAdvisor. Mrs. Merve dealt with us and she told that they have no free room at the moment and if there was an early check out she would contact with us and an hour later she called us. We spent simply great two days there. Its architecture is great workers are great. A boutique hotel by a concept of bed and breakfast where we felt home. We had meal in its a la carte restaurant for 2 nights, the mezes were great the fish was good, my 5-year-old daughter had a great time. There is a private beach across the hotel the sea is exquisite. The beach has pebbles and has a private sea pier. The pool is immaculate. The rooms are very commodious. There are areas where the children can pass time the hammocks are very pleasant. We thank especially to Mrs. Merve on the concierge and to Mrs. Esra in the a la carte restaurant. We definitely shall come back next year and spend more time” [21].

Regarded with table; mentioned about positive and negative comments. For Assos region, “Location” is the best opportunity which for establishment. In addition, understanding with “Cleanliness” and “Food and Beverage” are important for the customers. Realize to negative comments included mostly “Food and Beverage”, “Staff” and “Cleanliness”.

On the page of Assos of the TripAdvisor like on each page there is an establishment which is being recommended. And in the page of Assos among 18 establishments(enterprises) the one on the 11. line has been recommended. For this establishment, there is not a single comment of 1 star among in all 39 comments. All other enterprises have the comment of 2 or 1 star while this has none. So, it is pointed out why the TripAdvisor has recommended. The establishment on the 7. grade with 181 comments was voted 21 comments of 1 star. When it is looked at the comments done for the establishment it is seen that useful positive comments are either few or none. So, this has been regarded as the potential “Fake review”. It is found out that the people noted especially the low quality of service and the insufficiency of the quality of the rooms.

However, the establishment had 66 times 5 stars ratings and 47 times 4 stars so this shows us that the

establishment is not so a bad one. But the fact is it is not known by the consumers if these comments are fake or not and the point is they might damage the image of a place and the customer would hardly choose an establishment which was commented badly. As the hotels are 2, 3 or 4 stars the comments that people done are not extreme ones and it is observed that they tried to make the most appropriate positive comments about the establishments that they stayed.

It is seen that a comment or who rated 4 stars for an establishment has complained about the pollution caused by the butts on the beach and he has also complained there was not a responsible authority in the Children's Club and that the evenings are boring with no activity.

The comments about the region of Assos were narrated positively and the region as a regional destination was effected positively.

## **Conclusion and Suggestions**

**As a conclusion, we arrive at the idea that the TripAdvisor is a guide for both the enterprises and for the consumers.** Thus, the consumers by the comments that they made about establishments note the missing sides of the establishments and through this they help those who take these comments for granted as they use these notions for developing themselves. And this also helps the loyalty of the customer. The main subjects which were complained about have been noted as the quality of the service inadequate of recreational areas the quality of food and beverage. By a destination angle the natural beauties of the region and its climate were noted as the most admired subjects. The fact of the absence of a 5 stars establishment in the region has also effected the judgements.

**If the consumers have a research on the TripAdvisor before they plan their holiday in the region of Assos they will have a knowledge about the establishments. And in here the comments are directly effecting the choices of people. In the relationship between the customer and the enterprise the advantages and the disadvantages of the electronical environment occurs by the comments that the people shared.** For the region of Assos we come to a conclusion that the active domestic tourism is higher than the active international tourism. For having larger scale conclusion's much quantitative methods of researches can be used and larger destinations can be applied and reached. This research includes only the comments made for the establishments in the region of Assos and this is among the limits of the research.

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